

Draw a PROFILE VIEW of a BABY



Use proportional guidelines to draw an accurate side-on view of a baby's head and face

Supplies: paper, various grades of pencils, erasers, pencil sharpener, sandpaper block, ruler

This activity has four sections:

- Compare Proportions Then and Now
- Outline Guidelines for a Profile View
- Outline Baby Face Guides
- Draw the Baby's Face

Compare Proportions Then and Now

Back in the late 14th and early 15th centuries, little was known about facial proportions. During this time, an Italian painter named Simone Martini painted a portrait of a mother and child, titled *Madonna and Child* (Figure 1).

So why did artists depict adults with disproportionately long faces and babies who looked more like mini-adults than babies? One theory is that Medieval artists (such as Simone Martini) relied on perception rather than the science of facial anatomy and proportions. This assumption might also explain why some inexperienced 21st Century artists continue to incorrectly render facial proportions.

Figure 1: *Madonna and Child*, Simone Martini (ca. 1326)



As an Aside

The most common mistake when drawing a baby is rendering the face too long in proportion to the overall size of the head.

The drawing space in Figure 2 is divided into two identical smaller rectangles (marked A and B). The drawing on the left is based on the baby in Figure 1. The drawing on the right is a generic baby. Examine and compare these two drawings.

Note that the proportions of both babies are similar in that each:

- cranial mass is in the upper half of the rectangle (A).
- facial mass is in the lower half (B).

So, if the basic proportions are similar, why does the baby on the right look more realistic? The answer is found in the study of facial proportions.

Outline Guidelines for a Profile View

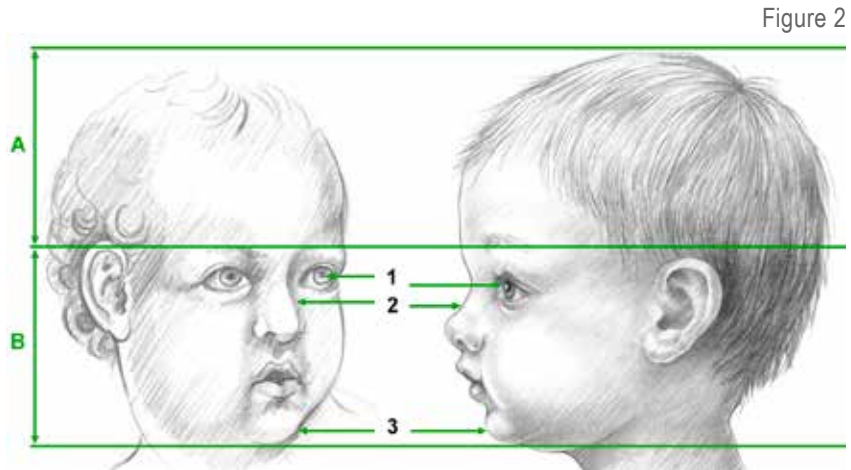


Figure 2

1. Use a ruler to outline a square drawing space divided into four identical smaller squares (Figure 3).
2. Lightly sketch a small circle in the lower left square to represent the size of a baby's face (Figure 4).
3. Lightly sketch a big circle in the big square to represent the size of the head.

Compare the sizes of the small and large circles to see for yourself how tiny an infant face is compared to an infant head.

Figure 3

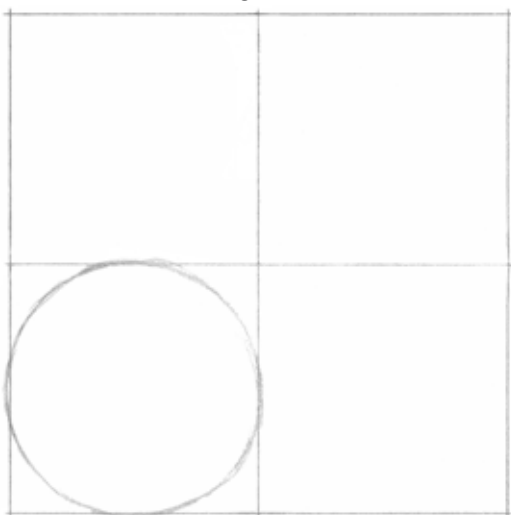
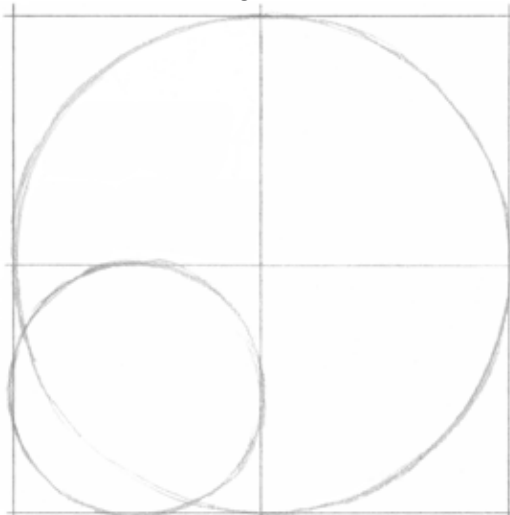


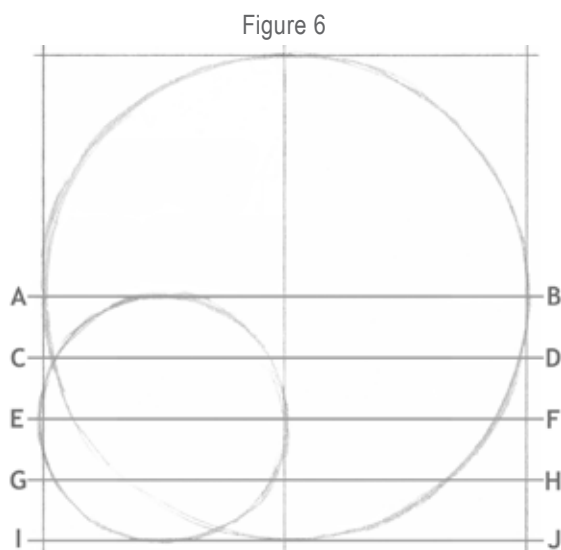
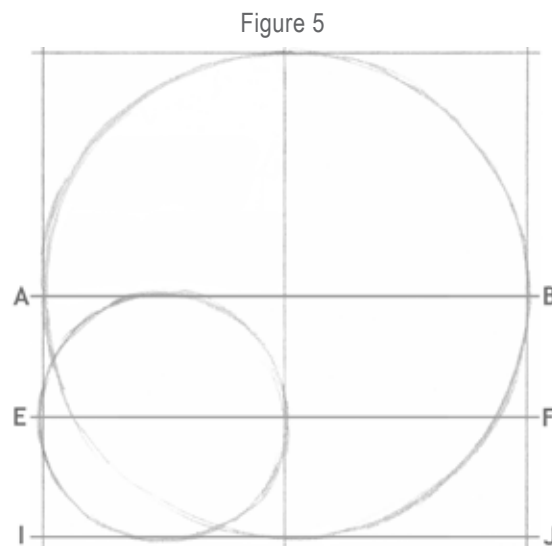
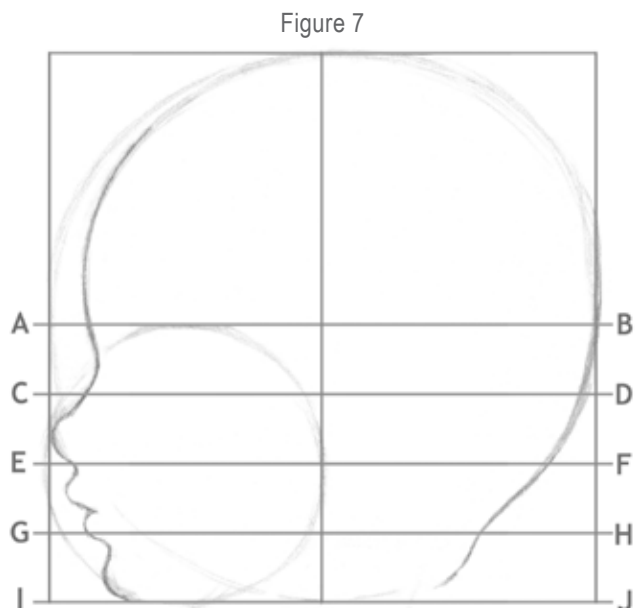
Figure 4



4. Add the letters AB to the horizontal center line in the large square and IJ to the lower side (Figure 5).

Outline Baby Face Guides

5. Slightly darken horizontal lines AB and IJ (you may need to erase them later on).
6. Use a ruler to measure the distance between lines AB and IJ, divide it in half, and draw horizontal line EF (Figure 5).
7. Measure the distance between lines AB and EF, divide it in half, and draw horizontal line CD (Figure 6).
8. Use the same process to draw line GH in between lines EF and IJ.
9. Refer to the guidelines to outline the shape of a baby's head and face (Figure 7).



Draw the Baby's Face

10. Refer to Figure 8 to outline the eye, ear, neck, and jawbone/chin.

The tops of the eye and ear are slightly below line AB. Line IJ identifies the lower edge of the jawbone.

The bottom of the chin (below IJ) isn't a reliable point for measurement because most babies have chubby chins or even double chins.



Tip!

As you draw the chin, neck, ear, and facial features in the next section, constantly refer to the:

- proportional guidelines.
- vertical line down the center of the large square.
- sides of each of the two lower small squares.

Figure 8

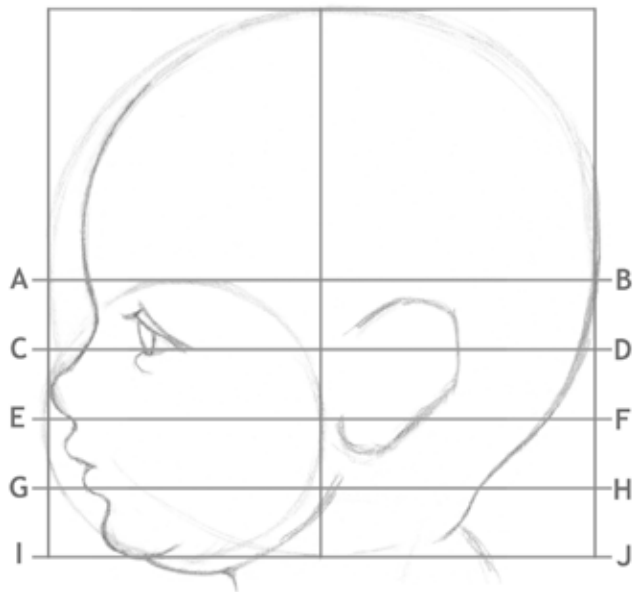
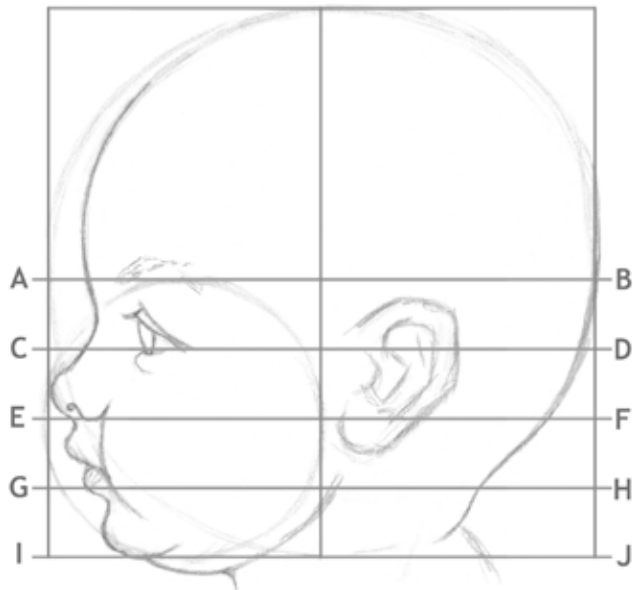


Figure 10



Begin by carefully erasing the guidelines and the outlines of the squares and circles. Then, pat your sketch with your kneaded eraser until the lines are barely visible.

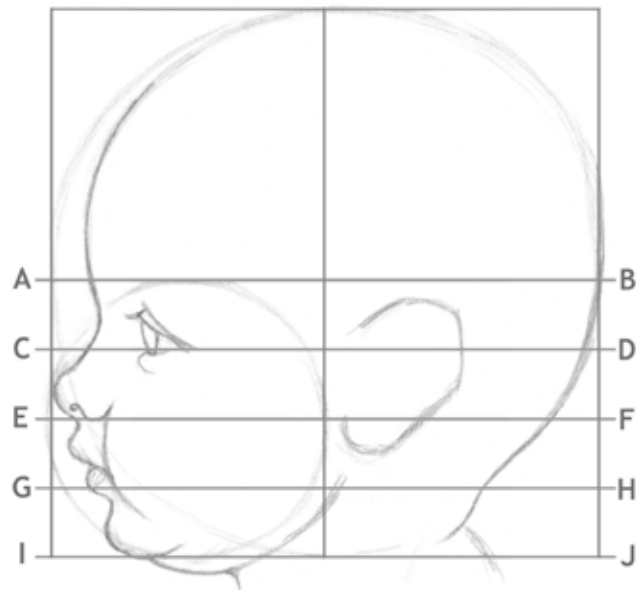
You can either draw the baby in Figure 11 or modify the details to draw a different baby. Use a sharpened HB pencil to keep the contour lines thin and neat. Remember – don't just trace over the original sketch lines. Instead, constantly smooth out lines and/or modify problem areas.

11. Refer to Figure 9 to add details to the nose (nostrils and wings), and mouth (lips).

12. Draw a curved line as the contour of the baby's cheek.

13. Sketch the eyebrows and add details to the ears (Figure 10).

Figure 9



14. Turn your sketch into a drawing of a baby's face.

Figure 11

